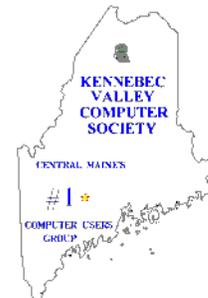


# The Newsletter of the Kennebec Valley Computer Society



**OCTOBER 2011**

## ANDROID 4

The announcement that Android 4 is soon to be arriving has led to a lot of discussion as to whether this version will be the successful challenger to Apple's IOS 5 in the smartphone and tablet market. The latest version of Android did not make it to the top of the hill in challenging Apple's IOS. There are many features in many of the Android tablets that the Ipad doesn't have. Primary among those is micro SD or SD card slots, mini USB or USB ports and HDMI connectivity. One computer magazine analyst questioned why anyone would buy an Ipad if they didn't have a computer, since it takes a computer to gain connectivity with other devices. The Ipad does have wide appeal with its' sleek design, huge application base, great screen response to tactile touch to name a few. The price for a wi-fi unit with 16 GB of usable space is \$499. I have seen Android tablets at the \$399 price point.

Should you buy an Android tablet now or wait for version 4 of the operating system? The reports coming from the trade magazines is that Android 4 is a significant improvement over Honeycomb.

It could well be that things will move fast as a run up to the Christmas shopping season. If the current tablet base is upgradable to Version 4 then

it would be safe to buy anytime you like. If there are upgrade path blocks in the way, then it will be smart to wait and see.

There have been hints that Apple will come forth with Ipad 3 but nothing solid on that front to report..

As for me, in the past I have been a pioneer (you know, the people with arrows in their back) when it comes to new technology but I have been most unwilling to pull the trigger on these. The nagging question keeps coming back. I have a smartphone with data plan operating on 3G so I am not limited to a wi-fi connection unless I were to get a tablet with 3G on board but that wouldn't be a phone. The limiting factor for me in the Smartphone is the screen size. There are trade offs in all of this. Eventually, I'll probably end up with a tablet but I'm going to bide my time.

-editor-

As you will notice this month's newsletter is very late. I am sorry for that. There have been a lot of things going on that have put me this far behind. I won't go into the reasons for this but to say it has been a very interesting time. Next month, coming up soon, will be back on track.

-editor-

**HAPPY HALLOWEEN**

## IN THIS ISSUE

Rainy Boston	Page 2
Make Your Computer....	Page 3
Tech Terms	Page 4
Microsoft Fixit	Page 5
Program Announcement	Page 6
Meeting Location Map and Me-Lug Program	Page 7
Membership Information	Page 8

### **KVCS MEETINGS** **General Membership**

The program for this month's meeting will be a demonstration of a developer copy of Windows 8.

**Thursday, October 13, 7:00 PM**

**Baker Community Center on**  
**Armory Street, just off**  
**Western Avenue near the**  
**National Guard Armory in**  
**Augusta.**

### **Board of Directors Meeting**

The next meeting will be held  
Wednesday, October 19, 6:00 PM at  
Lisa's Restaurant, Bangor Street,  
Augusta

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Send copy to the Editor:

Cecil Munson

760 Riverside Drive

Augusta, Maine 04330-8306

TEL: 622-0225

E-mail address: [cecil.munson@gmail.com](mailto:cecil.munson@gmail.com)

You may upload copy via E-Mail or bring to the KVCS general membership meeting. **Deadline for submission of copy for the newsletter is the 15th day of the month preceding the month of issue and will be run on a space available basis.** Copy is subject to editing.

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**KVCS WEB SITE**

[www.kvcs.org](http://www.kvcs.org)

*Click the link for more  
information about KVCS.*

*Bob Wells, our webmaster is  
suggesting you make it the  
opening page for your web  
browser so you get the latest  
announcements.*

**KVCS**

**Since 1984 - Central Maine's  
First Computer User Group**



**Bunker Hill Monument - Boston**

The Geeks never let a little weather stop them from traveling. We take cameras with us for the occasional unusual shot. This is one of them. It was 10:00 AM and very dark. There was a misty rain in the bay. The picture was taken from the van in motion on the Tobin Bridge. Pretty good catch from a moving vehicle don't you think?

The next Geeks on Wheels trip is tentatively scheduled for November 5 to go to Boston/Cambridge for Microcenter, Calumet Photo and then back to Melrose for the annual Hunt's Photo and Video sale. If you are interested let the driver, Tim, know. E-mail him at [driver@kvcs.org](mailto:driver@kvcs.org)



If you look closely you will see that some intrepid soul has tried to find a use for a broken compact disk using the floppy drive.....



Member of  
The Association of  
Personal Computer User Groups

## **Make Your Computer Either Stupid, Useless or a Zombie**

**By Vinny LaBash, Regular  
Columnist, Sarasota PCUG,  
Florida**

**September 2011 issue,  
Sarasota Monitor**

[www.spcug.org](http://www.spcug.org)

[Labash@spcug.org](mailto:Labash@spcug.org)

There are many ways to make your computer useful and reliable: add memory, buy more storage, and be sure to purchase gear and peripherals from reliable vendors. Some people nevertheless, seem determined to find ways to get into trouble. As a TV ad once proclaimed, "We all do dumb things from time to time," but making your computer useless doesn't have to be one of them.

Inadvertently choosing a wrong key combination, clicking OK in an online dialog box designed to deceive you into unknowingly downloading malware or unthinkingly doing something genuinely dumb are all preventable. They are easily avoided if only a small amount of premeditated thought and common sense are applied.

Are you a "Nervous Newbie?" People new to computers are often fearful of damaging their equipment. Don't worry! No matter what crazy combination of keystrokes you activate, the computer will not explode. Short of throwing the thing off a rooftop or beating it with a blunt instrument, it's highly unlikely you could do anything to seriously affect your hardware.

Instead, ask yourself, "What would happen if I lost all my data?" The answer will determine what kind of

backup plan you should implement. If all you do is surf the Internet, fool around playing games, and spend time on a social network site, you don't need much of a backup plan. If you run a business that depends on data that must be constantly updated, losing it all may mean you will retire much earlier than you anticipated at a reduced standard of living. Your personal situation is probably somewhere between these two examples.

Most people are at least vaguely aware that they should back up their system, but never get around to it because it's too much trouble. System crashes and data loss occur for many reasons. Power surges, lightning strikes, hardware failures, software glitches, and user error are among the common causes of losing information.

Your data is the most important part of your system. You can always reinstall a program, but there is nowhere you can go to buy a copy of your precious data. You must make a copy of your information, and a have recovery plan in place before disaster strikes. You don't have to buy a backup program. Windows 7 has a perfectly good one built-in. You can quickly find it in Control Panel. Use it. You won't be sorry.

Store your backups on a removable disk or flash drive. An increasingly popular alternative is to store data online. Whatever you do, it's important to keep your backups at a location away from your computer to protect against theft of your system or natural disasters. To find the best method for your personal needs there is no better place than your local computer user group.

You will find centuries of experience at your disposal.

Losing your data is no fun, but losing your entire system can be much worse. No computer should operate unprotected from electrical surges. The best form of protection is with an Uninterruptible Power Supply (UPS). It is internally powered by a battery that ensures a smooth flow of power even if an outage occurs. This gives you sufficient time for an orderly shutdown to avoid not only loss of information, but physical damage to the computer. Most surge suppressors are worse than useless because they give you a false sense of security.

A surge suppressor can protect a system from a voltage spike usually at a cost of severe internal damage to the surge suppressor. There is seldom any visible sign of harm so it's easy to assume you are still protected when you are not. A high quality UPS provides far more safety.

Most of us like a genuine bargain, and a great temptation is to believe free is always better than merely inexpensive. There are many high quality freeware programs, and many of dubious value. Some freeware programs are so sloppily written they can cause your computer to behave erratically or come to a screeching halt. Even if you take care to research and install only the best of the best, too many installs and uninstalls create useless entries in the registry. If not properly removed, these registry orphans can create their own problems such as system slowdowns and strange behavior. For good system performance, install only the programs you really need, and keep

-continued on next page-

**Make Your Computer Stupid..... - continued-**

your installs and uninstalls to a minimum.

Terabyte sized hard drives have made fragmentation less of an issue than with smaller capacity disks, but it can still be a problem if you neglect it too long. Fragmentation will become a non-issue when solid state drives eventually replace standard hard disks. Until that happy day arrives it makes sense to keep your files neatly arranged so the mechanical parts of your drive can take less time accessing programs and information. Files become fragmented through editing documents and other normal usage of computers including surfing the web. Excessive fragmentation forces your hard drive to perform extra work that eventually noticeably slows down your computer.

Windows 7 has an excellent built in defrag tool that you can access through the Systems Tools folder. The tool runs on a schedule, but you can run it manually anytime. The tool will defrag your system drive, removable storage devices such as USB flash drives, and almost any external storage device where you can store and delete files. Disk Defragmenter runs on an automated schedule, but you can also analyze and defrag your disks and drives manually.

Even if you own a solid state drive that never needs to be defragged, you can still run into trouble by letting it get too full. If you find yourself with a drive that's using more than 90% of its capacity, applications can suddenly exhibit very abnormal behavior. The system has no place

to put temporary files, and if a drive runs out of room, it can simply stop leaving you wondering what happened. An easy preventive is to use the Disk Cleanup Tool once or twice a month.

Are you guilty of indiscriminate link clicking? We all know about the danger of downloading attachments that could cause havoc with our systems, but do you click on hyperlinks embedded in emails? This could take you to web sites having implanted ActiveX controls designed to either damage your equipment, spy on you to collect passwords or track your activities to target you for personalized advertising among other nefarious reasons.

Some hackers are eager to install back-door or Trojan horses designed to allow them to control your computer without you being aware of it. Your computer could end up being a remotely controlled Zombie soldier in an army of similar machines to launch Distributed Denial of Service attacks.

Carelessly clicking on links could get you to very inappropriate sites that feature pornography, pirated videos, music or other kinds of software which could cause you personal embarrassment and even your job. People have been known to get in trouble with the law when a simple mouse click brought them to a child pornography site.

Think before you click. Bring your mouse pointer over the link. Often this simple act will reveal the real URL the link may be trying to disguise. If you aren't sure the link isn't going to take you to [www.yourpcistoast.com](http://www.yourpcistoast.com) don't do it.

We've covered a fair amount of territory here, but there is more danger lurking on the web than is dreamed of in your philosophy, Horatio. Choosing weak passwords, surfing the web without a firewall, failing to update anti-virus programs, and creating shared folders that the wrong people can access are among many additional dangers there simply isn't room for in this article.

Don't conclude that the web is too dangerous a place for you. The cautions mentioned here is the web equivalent of telling people to stay away from crime-ridden neighborhoods, and don't step off the curb into oncoming traffic without looking to see if it's safe first. As always, common sense is your first and best defense.

**Articles Courtesy Apcug and Articles2Go**

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**Tech Terms - Backside Bus**

There are two types of buses that carry data to and from a computer's CPU. They are the frontside bus and backside bus. Surprisingly, there is no correlation between these and the backside and frontside airs that snowboarders talk about.

While the frontside bus carries data between the CPU and memory, the backside bus transfers data to and from the computer's secondary cache. The secondary, or L2 cache stores frequently used functions and other data close to the processor. This allows the computer's CPU to work more efficiently since it can repeat processes faster.

-continued on next page-

**Microsoft FixIt**  
**By Ted Wirtz, Member,**  
**ORCOPUG (Orange County**  
**PC Users' Group), CA**  
**July 2011 issue, nibbles & bits**  
[www.orcopug.org](http://www.orcopug.org)  
[Twirtz@pacbell.net](mailto:Twirtz@pacbell.net)

My home computer is an HP Pavilion running Vista SP2. It has a memory card reader built into the top faceplate on the front of the computer that is capable of reading many of the common memory cards used in a digital camera. I commonly use it to transfer images from my digital camera which happens to use either SD or SDHC memory cards. (SD cards come in capacities up to 2 GB per card. SDHC cards come in capacities greater than 2 GB.)

Recently I inserted an SDHC card, and instead of seeing pictures, Vista saw it as a blank card and wanted to format it. Not good. Obviously I didn't want to format the card because I knew there were images on it. I ejected it and inserted a SD card. Vista saw images. Reinserted the SDHC card. No images.

I put the SDHC card back in my camera fearing the worst. All the images were there. Whew!

Okay, the card is good, but for some reason, now my system would not recognize SDHC cards. Bummer. Why SD but not SDHC? I didn't have time to mess with it then. I needed to get to my pictures. I connected the camera via a USB port and transferred the images that way. Clumsy but effective.

A couple of weeks ago I decided to attempt a fix for my reader. I opened up Device Manager and looked at the readers. No exclamation marks. Windows doesn't see any problem with the devices. Okay, maybe I need to update the drivers. I asked the system to check, and it reported later drivers were available. I installed the updated drivers and tested the reader. No joy. I still could not read SDHC. Tried an SD card. Oh great, now Vista can't read either type!

I went back to Device Manager, and selected "Roll Back Driver." Vista reported the driver was successfully rolled back. Time to test. Uh Oh. I still can't see any images on either type of card. I've gone from the frying pan into the fire!

Time to Google my problem. Google found something that sounded a lot like my problem. Solution: use Device Manager, delete the devices, reboot, let Vista re-discover the devices and all should be well. Only it didn't solve the problem.

Device Manager found the devices, reinstalled them, no exclamation marks, but they still can't read any of my cards.

Time to search the Microsoft site. I found a somewhat similar problem listed, where somebody was having a Firewire problem. Recommended solution: Use the Microsoft Fix It program. <http://support.microsoft.com/fixit/>

I downloaded and installed the program. The program opened up showing a series of problems that it could check. I scrolled down until I found "Hardware devices not detected or not working.

I clicked the Run button and crossed my fingers. The program reported it had found hardware changes might not have been detected, and had successfully updated. It also checked that Windows Update was configured to install drivers.

Okay, time to see if my problem was fixed. Yes! I can now read both types of SD cards just like when the machine was new. Problem solved.

I don't know if the Fixit program can solve other problems as easily, but I'm definitely going to keep this program installed on my computer. It's a keeper.

**Articles Courtesy Apcug and Articles2Go**

**Backside Bus - continued**

When the processor needs information from the L2 cache, it is sent over the backside bus. Because this process needs to be extremely fast, the clock speed of the backside bus cannot afford to lag behind. For this reason, the backside bus is often as fast as the processor. The frontside bus, on the other hand, is typically half the speed of the processor or slower.

**Halloween - Thanksgiving-  
Christmas- New Years Day  
coming right up.....**

KENNEBEC VALLEY COMPUTER SOCIETY

Presents

# Windows 8 Developer Preview

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**Presented by**

**Panel presentation**

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**Thursday October 13 th 2011 - 7 PM**

**Social Time 6:30 to 7 PM**

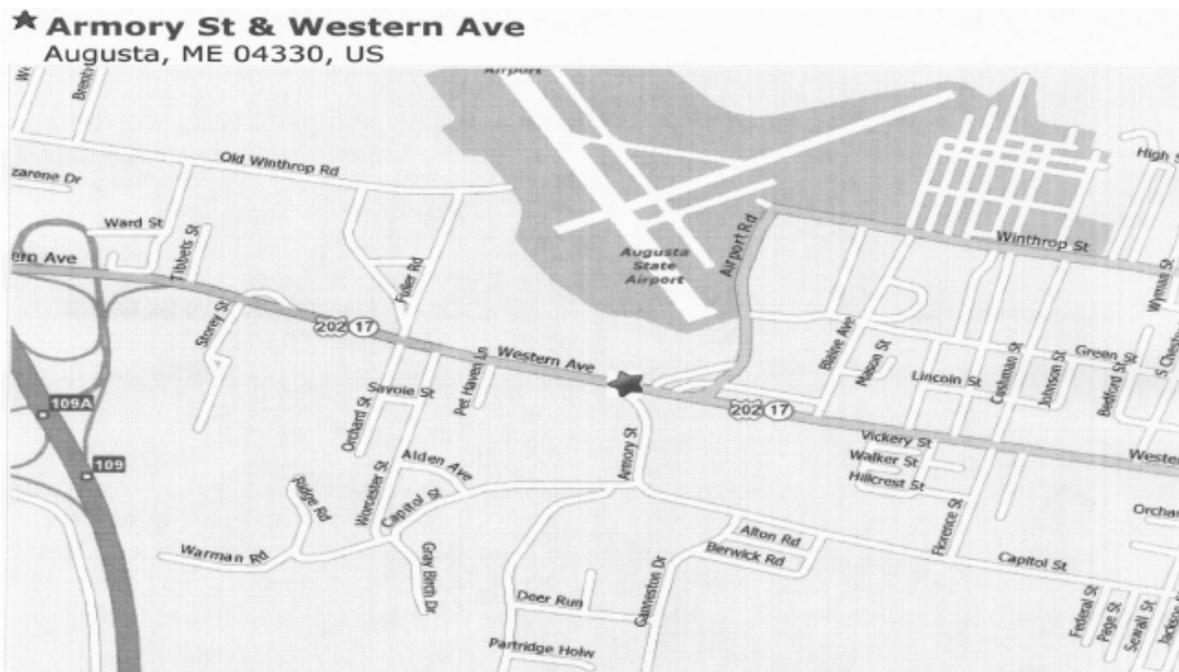
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**Lou Buker Community Center  
Armory Street  
Augusta, Maine**

**The Public is Cordially Invited**

**Bring a friend, meet a friend**

# KVCS MEETING LOCATION



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## MELUG-Central Maine Linux Users Group Meeting

For more information [www.melug-central.org](http://www.melug-central.org)

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### Tech Support from the Mouths of Babes.....

As we Silver Surfers know, sometimes we have trouble with our computers. I had a problem yesterday, so I called Eric, the 11 year old next door, whose bedroom looks like Mission Control and asked him to come over.

Eric clicked a couple of buttons and solved the problem.

As he was walking away, I called after him, 'So, what was wrong ?

He replied, 'It was an ID ten T error.'

I didn't want to appear stupid, but nonetheless inquired,

An, ID ten T error ? What's that? In case I need to fix it again.'

Eric grinned .... 'Haven't you ever heard of an ID ten T error before ?

No,' I replied.

Write it down,' he said, 'and I think you'll figure it out.'

So I wrote down:

ID10T

I used to like Eric.... the little bastard.

+++++

**KVCS - SINCE 1984**

This little piece reminds me of my Grandsons who are now 17 and 15 years of age. When they were about a year and a half old I saw them standing on their tip toes reaching up for the mouse and moving things around on the monitor. They grew up with technology and have no fear, unlike many older people of our generation, who didn't have much more than radios when that same age. It is amazing to look back to see just how far we have come in the past 30 years. What will the next 30 years bring? Remember Dick Tracy watches and how we never thought anything like that was possible. We are almost there.

**KENNEBEC VALLEY COMPUTER SOCIETY**  
**P.O. BOX 2791**  
**AUGUSTA, ME 04338-2791**



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Change of address

I would like to see more. Please send me a complimentary issue of the Newsletter.

I would like to join KVCS / renew my membership.

Annual Renewal (Dues waived for 2011 membership year)

FOR KVCS USE

New Member (Dues waived for 2011 membership year)

DP \_\_\_\_\_

Family (Dues waived for 2011 membership year)

CH \_\_\_\_\_

Student (Full time status - Dues waived for 2011 membership year)

CA \_\_\_\_\_

Name: \_\_\_\_\_ E-Mail address: \_\_\_\_\_

Address: \_\_\_\_\_ City/State \_\_\_\_\_ Zip: \_\_\_\_\_

Home Phone: \_\_\_\_\_ Work Phone: \_\_\_\_\_

Date of Birth: \_\_\_\_ / \_\_\_\_ / \_\_\_\_

Your Interest in Joining KVCS? \_\_\_\_\_

Referred by: \_\_\_\_\_

**11/10** Signature: \_\_\_\_\_